

Remarks

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and further examination are requested.

Claims 9, 21, 23 and 24 have been allowed. The Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for this indication of allowable subject matter.

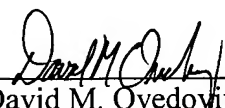
Claims 1 and 3-8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Lehman (US 2003/0181139) or Lehman (US 6,707,540) in view of Kimba (US 2001/0005265). Claims 1 and 3-8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Kimba in view of Lehman ('139). Claims 1 and 3-8 have been rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-10 of U.S. Patent No. 6,758,723, claims 6-16 of U.S. Patent No. 6,785,010, and claims 1-8 of U.S. Patent No. 6,942,543.

In order to expedite prosecution of the application, claims 1 and 3-8 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter contained therein. As a result, only the allowed claims remain pending.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that there are issues remaining which must be resolved before allowance of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

Kazuto HIROKAWA et al.

By: 
David M. Ovedovitz
Registration No. 45,336
Attorney for Applicants

DMO/jmj
Washington, D.C. 20006-1021
Telephone (202) 721-8200
Facsimile (202) 721-8250
March 15, 2006